lakhs and Rs. 1039.31 lakhs during the years 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 respectively to the State of Rajasthan under the various activities. The State Government has also provided financial assistance of Rs. 15,839.43 lakhs in the form of subsidy, share capital and loan to the cooperative societies during the last four years as under:—

Year	Amount released (Rs. in lakhs)
1998-99	5202.74
1999-2000	5279.16
2000-2001	2655.81
2001-2002	2701.72
TOTAL:	15839.43

(c) The consumable items like levy sugar, wheat, edible oil, cloths, pulses, daily consumable commodities, general provisions, consmetics, stationery, allopathic and ayurvedic medicines and agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, cattle feed had been distributed by cooperative agencies during last four years in the State of Rajasthan.

Growth rate of agriculture sector

3336. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the growth rate in agriculture has shown a lot of improvement in 2001-2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is its likely impact on the overall economy of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The growth rate of the sector, "Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing" according to the Advance Estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) released by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) was 5.7% for the year 2001-2002 as compared to (-)0.2% in the previous year, which was mainly due to increase in the production of most of the major crops.

The tentative assessment of production of major crops in 2001-2002 *vis-a-vis* the production in the previous year is as follow :—

Crop	Production (Million Tonnes		Present increase in 2001-2002 (Over 2000-2001)%
	2000-2001	2001-2002	
Cereals	185.25	197.38	6.55
Pulses	10.67	13.79	29.24
Oilseeds	18.4	21.16	15.00
Cotton*	9.65	11.3	17.10
Sugarcane	299.21	289.41	(-)3.28

*Production in million bales of 170 kg. each.

The impact of increase in crop production in the overall economy is reflected in the increase of GDP growth rate to 5.4% in 2001-2002 as compared to 4.0% in the previous year.

Withdrawal of subsidies to farmers

3337. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been proposed to withdraw the subsidies being given to farmers on different items, in a phased manner;

(b) whether it is also a fact that developed nations like USA still offer substantial subsidies to their farmers; and

(c) whether the poor farmers would be able to survive in the existing competitive scenario, with farmers of rich countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The developed countries like USA adopt policies concerning subsidies in tune with their general economic policies and programmes which are compatible with the provisions of WTO Agreement.

(c) The interest of the farmers is uppermost with the Government and the Government adopts policies on subsidies and revises their norms from time to time keeping in view the general well being of the farmers, resource availability and international commitments.